(b) whether it is a fact that quick conversion is imperative in the wake of container traffic growth, increase in the freight revenue, convenience of passengers and traders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) On a reference from Ministry, Southern Railway has given details and justification of conversion of left over section from Metre Gauge to Broad Gauge, which have not been taken up so far.

(b) A total of 1187 kms of gauge conversion of 2907 kms of metre gauge has been completed in Tamil Nadu and works are in progress for 1104 kms. 263 kms of gauge conversion is targeted for completion during 2005-06.

Gauge conversion in Southern Railway

412 DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) the stage of broad gauge conversion at all India level and out of which how much is yet to be done in Southern Railway and in Tamil Nadu in particular;

(b) when and how this neglect of regional imbalance can be set right by completing the broad gauge conversions in Tamil Nadu;

(c) whether there can be a time-frame for broad gauge conversion between Manamadurai and Rameswaram and between Trichy and Manamadurai; and

(d) how the link between Mandapam and Rameswaram across the sea has been proposed and when it will be executed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Position of gauge conversion in All India and Tamil Nadu as on 1.4.2005 is as under:—

(Figures in kms)

	All India	Tamil Nadu
Total Metre Gauge/Narrow Gauge line	27349	2907
Work completed	11463	1187
Work in Progress	8298	1104

(b) There is no regional imbalance in taking up gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu.

(c) and (d) On Madurai-Rameswaram (161 kms) gauge conversion project, Madurai-Manamadurai (48 kms) section has already been completed and work on Manamadurai-Mandapam section is targeted for completion during 2005-06. Line between Mandapam and Rameswaran is proposed to be converted to broad gauge. However, no time frame has been fixed for conversion of this section.

On Tiruchchirappalli-Manamadurai (150 kms) gauge conversion project, work on Tiruchchirappalli-Pudukottai (5[illegible] kms) section is targeted for completion during 2005-06 and the remaining section will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

Train acccidents

413. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of accidents which have taken place during the last two years inspite of various ways and means suggested by Committees appointed by Government from time to time;

(b) whether the recommendations/suggestions made have been implemented;

(c) the reasons for the accidents/mishaps taken place; and

(d) the steps taken or likely to be taken by Government to prevent accidents/mishaps in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) The number of consequential train accidents